most familiar to Westerners under the reign-names by which chronology is indicated, K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung. The Emperor K'ang Hsi ascended the throne in 1661 and died in 1722. Then, after a comparatively brief reign, not especially noteworthy, of about thirteen years, came Ch'ien Lung, from 1736 to 1796. For nearly a century and a half, therefore, with a short interruption, China's government was in the hands successively of two extraordinarily strong men. It was probably due largely to this coincidence of longevity and competence that the dynasty became so firmly established and lasted so long.

K'ANG HSI

The first Manchu to rule in Peking, usually known by the name of his reign-period, Shun Chih, was placed on the throne as a boy of nine the year before his troops came into possession of the Ming capital. During his childhood under the tutelage of a very able uncle, he did not assume the full management of the government until 1651, after the regent's death. He himself died in his twenties, in 1661—although rumor declared that he was not dead, but had retired, incognito, to a monastery—and so scarcely had time to make a marked impression on the Empire.

Shun Chih was in turn succeeded by a minor son who is, as we have said, commonly known as K'ang Hsi. K'ang Hsi was not quite seven when his father's death elevated him to the throne, and he was to hold the imperial title for a little short of sixty-two years. In 1667, when he was thirteen, he took control, although it was not until 1669 that he was able completely to break the power of the regents. For more than half a century, therefore, he ruled the destinies of the Chinese. A contemporary of such notable monarchs as Louis XIV of France, Peter the Great of

Russia, William III of England, and the fanatical warrior-conqueror Aurangzeb of the Mogul dynasty in India, in personal ability he was probably the equal and perhaps the superior of them all. He was characterized by great physical energy, an active and inquiring mind interested in a wide range of learning, an excellent memory, vivacity, and the will and the ability to lead and dominate men. Fond of vigorous outdoor life, he spent many of his days in the chase. He travelled extensively through his domains and gave much personal attention to his official duties, priding hinaself oo